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SUBJECT: USD(P) EDELMAN MEETING WITH FRENCH DEFENSE
MINISTER MORIN

Classified By: Political Minister-Counselor Josiah Rosenblatt for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. On November 9, USD(P) Eric Edelman met with French Defense Minister Hervé Morin in Paris as a follow-up to Secretary Of Defense Gates, 25 October meeting with Morin at the NATO Informal Defense Ministerials. Edelman provided Morin information on the Iranian ballistic missile threat. Morin responded to SecDef questions on the EU military capability by providing more detail on the French position, stating that the U.S. needed to "get out of its schizophrenia" regarding the development of independent EU military capabilities.

MISSILE DEFENSE/IRANIAN BALLISTIC MISSILE THREAT

¶2. (C) USD(P) Edelman explained that he was briefing Morin at the request of Secretary Gates in response to the recent NATO defense ministerial discussion on missile defense (MD), where Morin requested the U.S. "open its books" on both the technical parameters of the American MD system and our threat analysis on Iran. USD(P) Edelman and an intelligence analyst presented a briefing on the Iranian missile threat. Edelman also said the technical parameters of U.S. MD would be answered by Lt Gen Obering, MDA, on a subsequent visit. Edelman suggested the U.S. would like to share ideas for cooperation in MD with French industry, including potential testing at a facility in Bordeaux. Morin responded by repeating what he told SecDef Gates: "French participation in MD, especially NATO MD, depends on the threat and timeframe for the development of an Iranian long-range ballistic missile". Morin observed that analysis of the missile threat is significant for the French defense white paper. If the threat is real, France would have to decide whether to do something on its own or participate in the U.S. program. The GOF would also have to determine the capability of French industry to participate. Morin expressed confidence the U.S. would be forthcoming with information and create an open atmosphere similar to that which exists between the two countries on other planning issues.

EUROPEAN UNION DEFENSE CAPABILITIES

¶3. (C) USD(P) Edelman, following up on SecDef's meeting with Morin on 25 Oct 07, asked about France's position regarding an independent EU military capability. Morin said he senses a change in Europe regarding the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), citing German, Spanish, and

Belgian support for increasing the size of the EU military planning cell. Morin said Europe needs to have autonomous military assets in order to provide for its own defense. Morin added that a European military planning system would perfectly complement NATO, particularly since the EU would be able to deploy for civil-military and low-intensity conflict missions in theaters where NATO is unable or unwilling to deploy NATO assets. Morin stressed this is a major point for France, and that the U.S. should "get rid of its schizophrenia" over EU military planning. USD(P) responded that he would coordinate with U/S Burns to follow up.

14. (U) USD(P) Edelman has seen and approved this cable. Please visit Paris' Classified Website at:
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/paris/index.cfm>

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